

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-48 (Canceled)

49. (Previously Amended) Apparatus for gathering medical information regarding a patient and generating a billing code related to that information, including:

electronic means to repeatedly prompt for various information and record that information, said prompts being usable in real-time by a physician/user interacting with a patient to help guide the physician/user during said interaction with the patient and to remind the physician/user regarding specific points of inquiry that may be relevant to further examination of that patient, said prompts soliciting underlying information regarding the details of the medical service being provided, said underlying information being usable for calculating a medical service code based upon said underlying information rather than said prompts soliciting the physician/user for the medical service code itself, said underlying information being necessary for determining and/or supporting the medical services code for purposes of the physician/user's eventual billing for the services;

processing means for calculating intermediate values based on said recorded information;

processing means for using said intermediate values to generate said billing code.

50. (Previously Added) The apparatus of claim 49, in which said electronic means comprises a handheld computer with a touch screen interface, said interface facilitating the entering and recording of the patient information in real time.

51. (Previously Amended) A method for gathering a patient's data and using that data in generating a billing code, including:

providing an electronic computer to prompt an information gatherer to gather information that at least includes information relevant to calculating the billing code, said computer prompts being usable in real-time by the information gatherer interacting with a patient to help guide the information gatherer during said interaction with the patient and to remind the information gatherer regarding specific points of inquiry that may be relevant to further examination of that patient, said prompts soliciting underlying information usable for calculating a description of a medical service being provided rather than said prompts soliciting the information gatherer for the description of said medical services itself, said underlying information being independent of the description of said medical services for purposes of the eventual billing for the services;

obtaining and recording that information;

repeating said prompting, obtaining, and recording steps; and

electronically calculating a desired billing code from said gathered data.

52. (Previously Added) the method of claim 51, further including a step before said billing code calculation, said further step comprising electronically calculating an intermediate value for some subset of the data recorded for the patient.

53. (Previously Added) The method of claim 51 or 52, in which said electronic computer is provided in the form of a handheld computer with a touch screen interface, said recording step involving entering the patient information in real time via said touch screen interface.

54. (Previously Added) The method of claim 51 or 52, in which said step of calculating a billing code calculates an appropriate code from the united states health care financing administration codes.

55-56 (Withdrawn)

57. (Previously Amended) An integrated electronic system for conducting a medical interview of a patient and contemporaneously calculating an appropriate government billing code based on that interview, including:

electronic means for prompting an interviewer to make a series of inquiries for eliciting corresponding responses from the patient, said means optionally using at least some of the preceding responses in calculating further prompting for inquiries to make of the patient, said means being usable in real-time by the interviewer interacting with a patient to help guide the interviewer during said interaction with the patient and to remind the interviewer regarding specific points of inquiry that may be relevant to further examination of that patient, said prompts soliciting underlying information usable for calculating a description of the medical services being provided rather than said prompts soliciting the interviewer for the description of the medical services itself, said underlying information including information independent of the description of the medical services for purposes of the eventual billing for the services;

electronic means for recording the patient's response or other information regarding the prompted inquiry; and

electronic means for calculating the government billing code based on information recorded from the medical interview.

58-75 (Withdrawn)

76. (Previously Added) A process for generating documents, records, and codes in compliance with government or health insurance mandates, said process including the steps of:

(a) providing a database of procedure and treatment requirements;

(b) using at least one electronic input device to gather information regarding a patient, said input device configured to gather information on related input forms, which is based at least in part on information in said database and at least in part on one of history, physical examination, and medical decision making inquiries;

(c) calculating scores, said scores are based in part on said requirements and related to said billing codes and said gathered information;

(d) electronically linking said gathered information, said requirements, and said scores for processing;

(e) processing said linked information with an algorithm to compute a final score; and

(f) enabling a user to print or copy said final score and other gathered information to submit to said government or health insurance for payment.

77. (Previously Added) The apparatus of claim 49, 57, or 58, wherein said electronic means comprises at least one of desktop computer, computer terminal, laptop computer, handheld computer, handheld device, voice recognition device, voice recognition software, and scannable paper forms.

78. (Previously Added) The method of claim 51 or claim 52 or claim 55, wherein said electronic computer is at least one of desktop computer, computer terminal, laptop computer, handheld computer, handheld device, voice recognition device, and voice recognition software.

79. (Previously Added) The system of claim 57, further including at least one scannable form for prompting inquiries.

80. (Withdrawn)

81. (Previously Added) The apparatus of claim 49 or 58, wherein said billing code is based in part on comparing a total patient encounter time and a total patient counseling time.

82. (Previously Added) the method of claim 51 or 55, wherein said billing code is based in part on comparing a total patient encounter time and a total patient counseling time.

83–84 (Withdrawn)

85. (Previously Added) The method of claim 51, 52, or 55 further including storing patient counseling information and patient care information, and using said stored information for billing, historical tracking and analyzing.

86. (Withdrawn)

87. (Previously Added) The electronic system on claim 57, further including inquiries relating to history, physical exam, and medical decision making, and algorithm for computing said billing code based in part on said history, physical exam, and medical decision making inquiries.

88. (Previously Added) The apparatus of claim 49, in which at least some of said repeated prompting is determined to some degree by previous information recorded.

89. (Previously Added) The method of claim 51, in which at least some of said repeated prompting is dependent to some degree on previous data gathered from the patient.

90. (Previously Added) The system of claim 57, further including:

computer-readable patient-administered information forms for obtaining certain data related to patient care or to HCFA requirements.

91–93 (Withdrawn)